

The Dealers and Repairers Division of the Department of Motor Vehicles is responsible for licensing motor vehicle dealers and repairers in the State of Connecticut. This division has the authority to ensure that licensed dealers and repairers operate in accordance with the laws and regulations relating to the conduct of their business. If you as a consumer feel you have been unfairly treated by a dealer or repairer, you may file a complaint with the Dealers and Repairers Division. Complaints are utilized by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in the investigation of its licensees. You will be contacted by the DMV if the licensee named in your complaint is investigated. Complaints against licensees who are not investigated remain in file for possible future reference.

Private Sales and Repairs (i.e., sales and repairs not involving a licensed motor vehicle dealer or repairer) **fall outside the jurisdiction of the Dealers and Repairers Division.** Any problem you may have with another private individual is a civil matter, and **we cannot provide legal advice in such matters.** If the money involved does not exceed \$2,500.00, you should consider Small Claims Court. It is not necessary to enlist the services of an attorney since every aspect of the small claims session has been designed to permit a person to handle his or her own case from start to finish. Contact your nearest municipal court for information on how to bring a small claims action. If the money involved exceeds \$2,500.00, your case would be handled in the regular civil docket, and you should contact an attorney since normal court rules are complex.

If you have a complaint against a business which is not required to have a dealer or repairer license (i.e., an upholstery shop, a tire shop, etc.) you should contact:

The Department of Consumer Protection
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Telephone: 1-800-842-2649

Filing a Complaint

In order to file a complaint against a dealer or repairer, you must fill out Form K-35 (**Complaint against Motor Vehicles Sales or Service Business Firm**), which can be obtained in person at any office of the Department of Motor Vehicles or can be sent to you at your request (1-800-842-8222).

It is very important that you follow the directions on the K-35 form. Please include all telephone information, especially the number where you can be reached weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. It is essential that you include copies of all papers related to your complaint (i.e., warranty, invoice, repair bill, etc.). You should keep the original paperwork.

Please be sure you have contacted the dealership or repair shop regarding your dissatisfaction before filing a complaint with the Department of Motor Vehicles. They must be given an opportunity to resolve the problem.

Towing and Storage

The two most common complaints associated with vehicle towing and storage are overcharge and damage to the vehicle resulting from towing.

The state regulates the amount you may be charged for a nonconsensual tow. Nonconsensual tow charges are based on distance and vehicle weight. A nonconsensual tow means the towing of a motor vehicle from private property, (trespass tow) or for which arrangements are made by order of a law enforcement officer or traffic authority.

According to the Connecticut General Statutes, storage costs can be charged on the vehicle beginning 8 hours after the towing is completed. All towing businesses must post storage charges.

If your vehicle has been damaged as a result of improper towing by a licensed towing business and you have been unable to reach agreement with the towing business, we may be able to help you. *You must provide some proof (e.g., a police report) that the damage to your vehicle was the direct result of negligent towing.*

Vehicle Sales

According to Section 14-62 of the Connecticut General Statutes, each sale of a motor vehicle requires a properly prepared and signed invoice, a copy of which shall be provided to the purchaser. Dealers are required to indicate the conditions for refund of deposits on the invoice. Three conditions are possible: no refund of deposit, conditional refund of deposit, or unconditional refund of deposit. The Department of Motor Vehicles cannot require a dealer to refund your deposit if your signed invoice states that you are not entitled to a refund. **For both used and new vehicles**, a current emissions sticker or temporary compliance sticker must be in the lower left corner of the windshield of the vehicle at the time of sale.

Used vehicles: A Federal used car buyers guide must be posted in the left rear window of a used vehicle when it is displayed for sale. If the vehicle is not specifically guaranteed, the dealer is still responsible for all items on the vehicle necessary for its legal operation on the roads of Connecticut. If the vehicle does not meet the requirements for legal operation **at the time of sale**, it can only be sold legally if the transfer documents state that the vehicle is unsafe to operate on the road. An 'as is' sale does **not** exempt the dealer from responsibility for items necessary for legal operation.

Effective October 1, 1997, a new law requires that your used vehicle be mechanically operational and sound throughout a warranty period, if you paid at least \$3,000.00 to a licensed dealer and the vehicle is 6 years old or less. Please refer to the separate flyer **Connecticut's Used Car Warranty Law.**

DMV

MEETING THE NEEDS OF MOTORISTS
WITH INNOVATION SINCE 1917

New vehicles: Most new vehicles are covered by a factory (i.e., manufacturer's) warranty. If the same defect persists with your new car after repeated repair attempts, the problem with your new car may be classified as a '*manufacturer's defect*.' The problem then falls under the Connecticut **Lemon Law** and you should direct your complaint to:

The Department of Consumer Protection
Automobile Dispute Settlement Program
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Telephone: 1-800-538-CARS

If you have a question concerning vehicle recalls, you should contact:

National Highway Traffic Safety Admin.
400 Seventh Avenue S.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20590
Telephone: 1-800-424-9393

Repairs

Authorization and Estimate:

Connecticut law requires that a repairer obtain your oral or written authorization on any repair. If repairs exceed \$50, an estimate of the maximum cost to the customer must be given. If you feel that the estimate to repair your vehicle is too high do not authorize the repair.

Improper Repairs:

If you have a complaint about a repair job (i.e., the repairer fixed the vehicle incorrectly, the repairer failed to correct the stated problem, the repairer caused further damage to vehicle) it is important, in most cases, that we see the original part in order to determine its condition. A statement from another dealer or repairer as to the problem may also be required.

The repairer must provide you with the replaced part if you request it before or at the time the vehicle is returned to you. You have the right to see rebuilt or remanufactured parts (parts that the repairer normally returns to the manufacturer) and you may be able to purchase the replaced parts by paying a 'core' charge. Such a purchase is at the repairer's option.

Receipts: Be sure to get an itemized receipt every time you have a repair made, whether the repair is under the warranty or not. These receipts will serve as proof that attempts were made to repair the vehicle during the warranty period. Such proof can be especially important if your complaint is found to be covered by the Lemon Law.

If you were given an estimate and you agreed to it, there is no Department of Motor Vehicles violation, unless the garage exceeds the original authorized estimate.

Complaint forms are available by calling the Dealers and Repairers Division at 263-5715, or visiting the following DMV Branch Offices:

Bridgeport, Danbury, Enfield, Hamden, New Britain, Norwalk, Norwich, Old Saybrook, Putnam, Stamford, Waterbury, Wethersfield, Willimantic, Winsted

Branch Office Hours

Tues, Wed, Fri: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Winsted Office Hours are:

Tuesdays: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Putnam Office Hours are:

Tuesdays: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Stamford Office Hours are:

Wednesdays and Fridays:
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

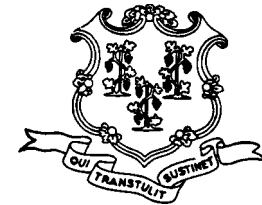
The Dealers and Repairers offices are located in Wethersfield, Room 102 and are open Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

All Offices are closed Sundays, Mondays, and Holidays.

For general information in the Greater Hartford area, call (860) 263-5700. Outside the Greater Hartford area call toll free: 1-800-842-8222

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Know Your Rights



Filing a Complaint with DMV Dealers and Repairers Division

John G. Rowland

Governor

Gary J. DeFilippo

Commissioner

State of Connecticut
Department of Motor Vehicles
60 State Street
Wethersfield, CT 06161
<http://dmvct.org>